

REMARKS

The foregoing amendment amends claims 1, 11, 12, 17 and 22, and cancels claims 2 and 19. Now pending in the application are claims 1, 3-18, 20-23, of which claim 1, 11, 12, 14, 17 and 22 are independent. The following statements address all the ground for rejection and place the pending application in condition for allowance.

Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 2, 3, 7, 10-13, 19, 22 and 23 are indicated to recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In the foregoing claim amendments, Applicants amend claims 1 and 17 to incorporate the subject matter recited in claims 2 and 19, respectively, and cancel claims 2 and 19. Applicants also amend claims 11 and 12 to rewrite in independent form including the limitations of base claim 1. Applicants further amend claim 22 to rewrite in independent form including the limitations of base claim 17.

Rejection of Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 17 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,546,987. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the following reasons.

In the foregoing claim amendments, claims 1 and 17 are amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in claims 2 and 19, respectively, which are indicated to be patentable by the Examiner. Claims 4-6, 8 and 9 depend upon claim 1 and add separate and patentable limitations to claim 1. Claim 20 depends upon claim 17 and adds separate and patentable limitations to claim 17.

In light of the foregoing arguments, Applicants submit that claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 17 and 20 are in condition for allowance and therefore request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the

rejection of claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), and pass the claims to allowance.

Claims 18 and 21

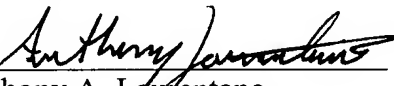
Non-elected claims 18 and 21 depend upon claim 17, which incorporates the patentable subject matter recited in claim 19 and hence is now in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that claims 17 and 19 are indicated as generic claims by the Examiner in the Restriction Requirement mailed March 28, 2005. Applicants therefore submit that on the allowance of claim 17, Applicants are entitled to consideration of additional species in claims 18 and 21 under C.F.R. §1.141. In light of this, Applicants request the Examiner to consider claims 18 and 21 and pass the claims to allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Anthony A. Laurentano
Registration No.: 38,220
LAHIVE & COCKFIELD, LLP
28 State Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02109
(617) 227-7400
(617) 742-4214 (Fax)
Attorney/Agent For Applicant